

BROADCAST 6406

DATE: August 3, 2010

TO: Local Department of Social Services Directors, Foster Care, Adoption and Eligibility Supervisors and Staff, Finance Directors, Licensed Child Placing Agencies, CSA Coordinators

FROM: Paul D. McWhinney, Director, Division of Family Services
Therese Wolf, Permanency Program Manager

TIME: 4:41 p.m.

SUBJECT: Implementing Rate Structuring for All Children Placed in Treatment Foster Care (TFC) Homes: **Action Required**

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Background

Virginia implemented a new rate structure process on October 1, 2009 required for children placed in foster and adoptive homes providing TFC services. The Virginia Enhanced Maintenance Assessment Tool (VEMAT) was introduced as the required state-wide tool to be used when assessing a child's need for additional daily supervision (ADS). The child's score on the VEMAT is then used to determine the enhanced maintenance payment to the foster or adoptive parent. At that time the VEMAT was required to be used when a child:

- Was placed in a foster or adoptive home in which TFC services are provided;
- If a child in a home providing TFC services was moved to a different TFC provider under the auspices of another Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA); and
- Was placed in an adoptive home and the adoptive parent was entering into an adoption assistance agreement.

Local departments of social services (LDSS) had the option of implementing the rate structure process and using the VEMAT to determine the enhanced maintenance amount for all children in LDSS approved homes requiring such additional support. (Selecting this option allowed LDSS to claim Title IV-E funds for ADS for those children eligible for enhanced maintenance payments).

The rate structure process was NOT initially required to be used for children placed in TFC homes prior to October 1, 2009. This was a negotiated agreement by the members of the rate structure workgroup in order to allow foster and adoptive parents providing TFC services for children placed prior to October 1, 2009 time to learn about rate structuring and adjust to possible reductions in their maintenance payments. Implementing rate structuring for all children in TFC homes regardless of the date of their placement in that home is required on October 1, 2010. No Title IV-E maintenance funds (basic or enhanced) may be claimed for these children after October 1, 2010 unless the amount of the payment has been determined by the VEMAT.

Implementing Rate Structuring for All TFC Home Placements

All children in homes providing TFC services where an ADS payment for the child is being made, and the payment was not determined by the VEMAT, must apply the VEMAT to determine whether and how much the ADS payment should be prior to **October 1, 2010**.

Application of the rate structure process as identified in guidance posted at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/fc/rate.cgi> must be used. Additional guidance not in the manual that shall be followed includes:

- LDSS should begin assessing the ADS payment by using the VEMAT immediately;
- The VEMAT is not required to be used for any child in a TFC home where no ADS payment is being made; and
- The ADS payment (whether an increase or decrease) as determined by the VEMAT shall take effect **on** October 1, 2010.

LDSS and LCPAs should help the foster and adoptive families understand why the VEMAT-identified rate is not changing until October 1, 2010, especially when the rate will increase. (See “Background” section of this broadcast).

LDSS who have a large number of children in TFC home placements and require additional time to bring all parties together to properly complete the rate structure process should contact Therese Wolf for further instruction.

No other changes to the rate structure process will be implemented at this time.